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CHINESE DITTIES.

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TIENTSIN:
THE TIENTSIN PRESS, LIMITED,
1922.

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W. PENTIER

PREFACE.

The ditties here reprinted appeared in the *New China Review* for 1921-2. Ditties generally give a valuable insight into local customs, but those included in this pamphlet are intended chiefly for the student of the Chinese language, who, by memorizing them, will find them an aid to its acquisition. It is surprising that so useful and pleasant an exercise should have been so much neglected.

E.T.C.W.

Peking, July, 1922.

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Since (about the beginning of the nineteenth century) the folk-lore and folk-songs of various lands have been seriously investigated, and folk-lore has become a science, a vast field of information has been disclosed, the full meaning of which is only now beginning to be generally appreciated. Thinkers now see, what the earlier collectors perceived dimly if at all, that these tales and songs possess a very great value for the elucidation of the social history of mankind. They furnish pictures of the past not otherwise to be seen. They help to keep alive customs and beliefs which, but for embodiment in them, would have died out and so have failed to record their testimony in the sociologist's note-book. They prove the substantial uniformity of the working of the human mind under the same physical conditions all over the earth. The fundamental bases of popular thoughts and beliefs are everywhere the same. The particular development is the work of each particular race.

The particular branch of folk-lore found in China has been partially investigated by some able scholars, but the field is so vast as to be practically inexhaustible. Any small contribution to this gigantic work is therefore heartily to be welcomed. Recently, the excellent idea occurred to the editor of the official gazette of the Government University at Peking to ask the scholars to send to him the popular ditties current in their respective provinces or districts. Since these scholars hail from all parts of China a large and valuable collection was thus obtained. In the belief that they may be instructing and interesting to readers of the *New China Review* I propose to translate a portion of them, giving the Chinese text, and some notes where elucidation seems necessary. As a recreation from more laborious work it is pleasant to dip into the lighter kinds of Chinese literature, and if knowledge is to be gained at the same time the pleasure is doubly enhanced.

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The view of the man in the street that these tales and songs of the people are meaningless and useless is superficial. He himself will hum a song as he walks along or read a legend or fairy-tale when he goes home, and, though he does not stop to inquire into causes, he does not do these things because they give him pain. But the very fact that he sings the song or reads the tale because it gives him pleasure and not pain shows that it serves some positive purpose in his life. It may be doubted, for instance, if the singing of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs would have had the vogue it has did they give pleasure to those only in whose praise they were sung and not to the singers themselves, either directly or indirectly. Now if a certain quantity of positive pleasure is derived by the Chinese rustic from the lilting of his ditty, of whatever kind it may be, we have but to multiply that quantity by many millions up to four hundred to see that the total sum of pleasure derivable by the Chinese nation from these little songs is by no means a negligible quantity. We may rightly conclude that, taken as a whole, the nation would be a duller nation without them. Should it be replied that pleasure is not, or at least should not be, the sole object of existence, then I would say that, though that is true, I am at one with those philosophers who hold that pleasure is a legitimate object of pursuit, in and for itself. It may be the sad truth that humanity, in its present phase and mood, prefers amusement to instruction, but that does not detract from the value of amusement itself as a factor in human progress. The function of amusement, like that of music, is to stimulate. It is to the mind what alcohol is to the body, and should supplant it in the vital economy. We have only to consider the physical effect of a good joke ("laugh and grow fat") or the difference between the spring in the step of a regiment headed by a band playing an inspiring tune and the comparative dullness of the musicless march, to see that these aesthetic products play a very important part in human existence. As one of the Chinese ditties here translated says, "To sing a song cheers the heart." No one will deny that "Tipperary" and "Gilbert the filbert, the colonel of the knut," and little Renée Mayer's dance and song, "O won't you come with me, boys, to Berlin on the Spree," killed many a German and many a Turk. Anyone who has not tried the effect of perusing his book of favourite passages in prose and verse on those days when drenching rain drowns all hope of outdoor sport, is lacking in one of the links between pleasure and pleasure which he would do well to forge

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with as little delay as possible. Dancing, music, poetry, literature, painting, etc.—all the aesthetic products—are not merely so many words, symbols, or actions, but are instruments for the exaltation of life. As stated above, the sum total of the stimulating pleasure added to the Chinese nation by their ditties alone may be a million-fold greater than is usually supposed. The translator therefore renders a larger service than that of merely changing folk-lore and folk-songs from one language into another. He enables those who could not speak to people of other nationalities in their own language or read their books to participate in the exaltation of life which this lore and these songs help to promote.

Naturally, coming from different districts and different types of Chinese people, the ditties here set forth in English dress are themselves of various kinds. Some are instructive, some both instructive and amusing, some merely amusing, some merely interesting. Most are at least as interesting as the "weather rhymes" of Western countries. The right to a hearing of those which are instructive only, or those which are both instructive and amusing, not being questioned, needs no defence. The right to a hearing of those which are only amusing has, I submit, been logically established in the above remarks. Finally, should there be any of my little folk-songs which can rightly be described as neither instructive, nor amusing, nor even interesting, I would still hold a brief for them on the ground that their often subtle phraseology may at least serve to give the student of Chinese excellent practice in translating them into his own language. If a poet, he might also exercise his gift by trying his hand at putting his translation into graceful verse, without damaging the meaning and spirit of the original Chinese text.

吟
吟
喝
喝
上
上
四
四
川

買
買
個
個
破
破
砂
砂
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淚
淚
不
不
乾

一
一
出
出
南
南
津
津
關

Whenever one goes through Nan-ching Pass tears fill the eyes. Buy a broken gravel-pot, and *yao-yao ho-ho* away to Ssüch'uan!

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[This is one of the songs of the boat crews on the Ssü-ch'uan rivers, which are notoriously difficult to navigate. A sigh is to be understood after "eyes." "Broken gravel-pot" refers to their poor food, prepared in a cheap crock. "Yao-yao ho-ho" is the yodel sung by the men as they haul up the sail.]

只怕我沔古老陂

不怕你狡

不怕你奸

又奸又狡是漢川

狡孝感

奸黃陂

Huang-p'o is treacherous, and Hsiao-kan is cunning, but Han-ch'uan is both treacherous and cunning. I fear not your treachery, I fear not your cunning; I fear only my Mien *ku-lao*.

[The old farmers of Hupei say that this song first came into existence after the time of Hung and Yang, of T'ai-p'ing rebellion fame. Huang-p'o, Hsiao-kan, Han-ch'uan, and Mien [-yang] are names of districts in that province. *Ku-lao*, "ancient-olds," or grey-beards, is a nickname given to themselves by the natives of that district. 陂 is here read *p'o*. Huang-p'o is the native place of President Li Yüan-hung.]

還是老婆好

娘是路邊草

討了老婆不要娘

麻雀子尾巴長

The sparrow's tail is long. When he is married he forgets his mother. The mother is the grass by the road-side. The wife is best after all.

[This song is current in Nan-ch'ang, capital of Kiangsi.]

黑龍江真是怪

窗糊紙糊在外

養活個孩兒吊起來

十七八的姑娘刁着個大烟袋

這些怪還不怪

兩口子穿着一雙鞋

大姑娘跑了娘不愛

你說可怪不可怪

Hei-lung Chiang is indeed peculiar. There the window paper is pasted outside the windows; when rearing a child they hang him up; and a girl of 17 or 18 smokes a large tobacco-pipe. These customs may not be very strange; but husband and wife wearing one pair of shoes, and when a daughter runs away the mother does not love her [enough to get her back!]
—how say you, is not that strange?

[Hei-lung Chiang is in the cold-winter zone. Owing to the great quantity of snow and rain most of the windows have the paper pasted on the outside and covered with oil. The women all have unbound feet, so there is no difference in the men's and women's shoes. Children, when one month old, are hung up in an oblong bamboo cradle attached by a long cord at each end to the ceiling of the house. Whenever the child cries the mother rocks the cradle with her hand. The common saying is, "The work of swinging the cradle is never forgotten, even until death." 刁=咬, to hold in the mouth. The last 大, here, "generally," "always."]

黑龍江有三寶

人參貂皮靺鞨草

In the province of Hei-lung Chiang there are three precious things, namely, ginseng, sables, and *chi-la* grass.

[*Chi-la* grass is a special product of Hei-lung Chiang. It grows in damp places, and is as soft as silk. As the climate is cold and the roads both stony and muddy, travelling is difficult, and cloth shoes cannot be used, so the inhabitants

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make their shoes of skin or hide and give them the name of *wu-la* 烏拉, i.e., *chi-la*, the local pronunciation of *wu-la*, ula grass. The "*wu-la*" alone being too hard for the feet, they pound a thick lining of grass inside the shoe, so that even when walking in frost or snow the feet are not cold. The grass itself having no name it takes the name of the shoe.]

不
交
一
真
靡
子

寧
受
三
年
八
羅
子

不
管
臭
靡
子
共
一
天

寧
坐
三
年
監

It is better to be in prison for three years than to associate for one day with a frowsy Chi-tzü; it is better to suffer three years' *pa-lo-tzü* than to be friends with [even] a decent Chi-tzu.

Pa-lo-tzü is the place of confinement for criminals. *Chu* Chi-tzü (臭 here read *chu*) and *Chên* Chi-tzü are nicknames of the natives of Hei-lung Chiang. The food of the people consists mostly of millet, called by them *chi-tzü*, and the name of the food is given to the people. *Pa-lo-tzü* closely resembles the Russian *politsija*, so the word may have been borrowed from the Russian language.]

初
一
元
旦
拱
拱
手

除
夕
一
宵
不
見
面

二
十
九
有
有
有

二
十
八
我
設
法

二
十
七
莫
焦
急

On the 27th, "Don't be anxious." On the 28th, "I am making an arrangement," On the 29th, "I have, I have, I have." On the 30th, "We do not see each other the whole night. On the 1st day of the New Year, "We salute each other!"

[This is the *patois* of the Chiang-pei rustics. It refers to the distressed state of debtors towards the end of the year, when, *more sinico*, all accounts must be settled. The speaker is the debtor. "Money" is to be understood at the end of the third line.]

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做天難做四月天

蠶要溫和麥要寒

種小菜的哥哥要落雨

採桑娘子要晴乾

The weather in the fourth month is very severe. The silkworms must be kept warm and the wheat cold. The man who plants small vegetables wishes for rain. The woman who picks mulberry leaves wants fair, dry weather!

[This is current in Chi-hsi, Anhui. Cf. the respective mental attitudes of the corn and turnip growers in the West.]

月明起起做賊偷米

聾的聽見啞的叫起

蹩的起着睛的認米

亮月白庭堂

賊來偷家堂

聾聾聽見瞎子看見

哉蹩脚追上去

曲手一把拖住

The brilliant moon has risen; The thief comes to steal some rice. The deaf hear; the dumb cry out; the lame pursue; the blind man identifies the stolen rice!

[This is current in Chi-hsi, Anhui. It might be entitled "The Absolutely Impossible." In Chiang-yin, Kiangsu, it is varied slightly as follows: The moon is very bright. The thief enters the shrine [house] to steal. The deaf hear; the blind see; the lame run; the man with the broken arm catches the thief! Cf. "a rope of lamp-grass and a rod of chaff." Lamp-grass is used in medicine.]

井裏開花壽蓉長

三歲二歲沒了娘

跟着爹爹還好過

廣怕爹爹娶後娘

娶了個後娘三年整

養活了個小小叫孟良

孟良吃稠的我喝湯

端起碗來淚汪汪

拿起筭來想親娘

左手拿上千張紙

右手拿上整柱香

一走走到墳頭上

淚點滴到花鞋上

鼻子棒到樹梢上

老鳥過來吞一嘴

野鵲過來也嘗嘗

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The stalks of the flowers in the well are long. When a boy is only two or three years old and his mother dies, he can live very comfortably with his father. His only fear is that his father will provide him with a step-mother, and three years after the marriage she will give birth to a son whose name will be Mêng Liang. Mêng Liang will eat the solid part of the macaroni, and I shall have only the remaining gravy. When the bowl is in my hand my tears flow. When I take up the chop-sticks I think of my mother. Then in my left hand I take a thousand pieces of mock money, and in my right a bundle of incense sticks, and go to the tomb, The tears from my eyes drop on to my embroidered shoes, and those from my nose on to the branches of the trees....

[This is current in Kao-i, Chihli. Mêng Liang is apparently so christened merely for the sake of the rhyme. The last two lines are best left untranslated.]

山西雀山西飛
沒娘的孩子吃的虧
白天裏不得好飯吃
黑夜裏不得熱炕睡
枕什麼枕棒錘
蓋什麼蓋篋箕
ㄈㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨ
ㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨ
ㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨ
ㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨㄨ
打鼾睡

The Shansi sparrow flies to Shansi. The loss suffered by the orphan is that in the daytime he cannot get good food to eat and in the night has no warm *k'ang* to sleep on. What is his pillow? It is a wooden hammer. What is his coverlet? It is a winnowing-fan. (Sounds of snoring.)

[This is also current in Kao-i. The wooden hammer is used for pounding cloth.]

拍大脾唱山歌
人人都欺負我無老婆
拿起心肝娶幾個
有錢娶個嬌嬌女
無錢娶個豆皮婆

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Strike the belly! Sing the mountain song! Everyone despises me because I have no wife. Because, on this account, my anger is aroused, I marry many; when I have money I marry a beautiful girl; when I have none I marry an ugly one!

[大脾 *sc.* 肚皮. 拿 *sc.* 惱. This is current in Kuang-chou (Canton), Kuangtung.]

牆頭上一株草
 風吹兩邊倒
 今日有客來
 舍子好鯽魚好
 鯽魚肚裏緊愜愜
 爲舍子不殺牛
 牛說道耕田犁地都是我
 爲舍子不殺馬
 馬說道接官送官都是我
 爲舍子不殺羊
 羊說道角兒彎彎朝北斗
 爲舍子不殺狗
 狗說道看家守舍都是我
 爲舍子不殺豬
 豬說道沒得說
 一把尖刀戳出血

The tuft of grass on the wall is swaying in the wind. Today a guest arrives. What is there ready to eat? There is the carp; but the carp makes a sound of disapproval with its stomach. Why not kill the ox? The ox says: "I am needed for ploughing and harrowing the fields." Why not kill the horse? The horse says: "I go out to receive the officials and see them off." Why not kill the sheep? The sheep says: "My horns curve gracefully toward the North Star." Why not kill the dog? The dog says: "I watch and protect the house." Why not kill the pig? The pig says: "I have nothing to say;" so a sharp knife lets out his life-blood.

[This is current in Anhui and Hupei. The sheep evidently defends himself on the ground of being ornamental if not useful.]

磕睡虫磕睡虫
 磕睡來了不由人
 惟願婆婆早早死
 讓小媳婦一覺睡到大天明
 狗察那裏講
 磕睡虫磕睡虫
 磕睡來了不由人
 惟願婆婆百百歲
 管得小媳婦自成
 人
 鍋頭碗上冷粥帶去
 吃了粥每冷冰冰
 菜每二三根
 糲每水伶仃
 狗察那裏講
 粥每熱溫溫
 菜每油吞吞
 糲每真乾淨

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“Sleep bug! sleep bug! When the sleep bug comes one has no longer control of one’s self. I only hope that my mother-in-law will die soon, so that the small wife [I] may sleep all through the night till dawn. (Bother it! what am I saying?) Sleep bug! sleep bug! When the sleep bug comes one has no longer control of one’s self. I only hope my mother-in-law will live to be a hundred years old, to see that I grow up properly.” (The porridge in the bowl on the hearth is cold. She takes it and eats it). “The porridge is cold as ice; the vegetables are only a few snips; the chopsticks are dirty. (Bother it! what am I saying?) The porridge is hot; the vegetables luscious; and the chopsticks beautifully clean!”

[磕睡虫 an insect that causes drowsiness. 磕 properly 臚]

風
吹
蓮
子
香

汪
洋
水
滿
過
菱
塘

照
見
汪
洋

月
亮
堂
堂

How brilliantly the moon shines, reflecting itself in the broad lake! The water from the broad lake overflows into the caltrop pond. The perfume of the lotus-blossoms is wafted by the wind.

[Current in Anhui and Hupei.]

將軍打馬過田莊
見一公公在路旁
請問公公多少歲
家居何縣并何方
可有兒郎可有女
可有家當並田莊
老漢今年九十九
老妻一百差一雙
等到皇上開今榜
明年掛個百歲坊
五個孩兒不學藝
都在朝中伴君王
大孩兒當朝為宰相
二孩兒禮部在中堂
三孩兒雲南為總督
吏部天官第四郎
要算五郎年紀小
新科獨占狀元郎
還有一個小女十八歲
朝中選去做娘娘

A general, when riding across a farm, saw an old man standing by the roadside. He said to him: “May I sak your age, Sir, your native place, how many sons and daughters you have, and the value of your real and personal property?” “I am ninety-nine this year,” he answered; “my wife is a hundred less a couple of years. When the emperor next issues the ‘golden list’ I will have a p’ai-lou erected to me in honour of my having completed the century. I have five uncultured

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sons. They are all serving the emperor in the court. The eldest holds the position of Prime Minister; the second is President of the Board of Rites; the third has been appointed Viceroy of Yünnan, the fourth is President of the Board of Justice; and the fifth, still a junior, has recently passed first at the Palace Examination. Besides these I have a daughter, eighteen years of age, who has been selected to be the emperor's wife."

[There is some inconsistency as regards the first and fourth sons, since these two posts were one and the same in ancient times 金榜 is perhaps better than 今榜. This and the following seven ditties are current in Anhui and Hupeh.]

唱支曲解心寬
挑担綾羅上高山
高山頂
石臺石橙石蘭干
紫竹開花養牡丹
爺做狀元兒做官
唱支曲解心寬
挑担綾羅上高山
山頂廟門開
三個學生進廟來
一個裝香兩個拜
佑先保生中秀才
秀才騎馬馬頭高
一根馬鞭十八節
讀書之人節節高

To sing a song cheers the heart. Carrying my load of silks I climb up the high mountain. On the summit are stone terraces, stone benches, stone balustrades. The violet bamboo blossoms are as beautiful as the peonies. One's father becomes a *chuang yüan*, one's son an official.

To sing a song cheers the heart. Carrying my load of silks I climb up the high mountain. The door of the temple on the summit is open. Three students enter it; one burns a stick of incense, the other two kneel to the idols praying that they may become *hsiu-ts'ai* graduates. A *hsiu-ts'ai* has a whip of eighteen joints and rides a horse which holds its head high. Those who study will be promoted step after step.

[挑担 loads swung from each end of a bamboo pole placed across the shoulder. The length of the whip and bearing of the horse are cases of vicarious ostentation.]

交交辯
紫紅線
上茶館
賣湯元
湯元賣完了
交交辯長長了
此章女小孩唱
么么弟弟穿紅鞋
搖搖擺擺上學來
先生先生你莫打我
我回去吃口渣渣來
此章男小孩唱

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With my curly, curly pigtail,
Tied with red cord,
I go to the tea-house,
To buy congee balls.
The congee balls are all sold—
My curly, curly pigtail
Has grown quite straight!

(This is sung by little girls.)

Tiny, tiny young brother,
Wearing his red shoes,
Comes swaggering to school.

“Teacher, teacher, do not beat me!

I will go home and take a drink of my mother's milk!”

(This is sung by little boys.)

[Congee balls are eaten on the 15th of the 1st moon. 么 is used by Soochow people for 小. Red shoes are worn by young children. The 鄂 Hupei people call milk 渣渣.]

滿月回門望嫂哥
嫂嫂聽着旁人說
打發鴉鬢泡清茶
堂前見過家常禮
姑娘你到他家去到一月
姑爺待你如何
嫂嫂你是前生前世修得到
今生今世嫁把我家哥
我是前生前世修不到
今生今世嫁着个酒糊塗頭
不會上床脚睡下
枕頭倒枕就打呼
姑娘等着哥哥回來日
勸得鸞鳳合成雙
嫂嫂若是真真有那日
坐轎回門謝嫂哥

One month after marriage I return to my home to see my elder brother and his wife. My sister-in-law, hearing of my return, sends the maid-servant to make some tea for me. After I have paid my respects to her [she says]: “My younger sister, you have now been a month at your husband's house; how does he treat you?” “My elder sister,” [I reply] “how fortunate it is that you married my elder brother! I am so unfortunate as to have married a stupid drunkard. He sleeps with his head at the foot of the bed, and no sooner does it touch the pillow than he is sound asleep!” “Dear younger sister,” [says she] “when my husband comes back he will

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reconcile you two." "My elder sister," [I reply] "if that is really so, I will return in my chair to thank you both!"

留得
說罵的姑娘不抬的
留得屋裏
姑娘不嫁的
打開城門嫁哥娘
桂花香
橘子皮

Orange-peel and cassia-scent! The city gate is opened for the bride to go to her husband. But there are many who are not allowed to marry, but merely are left in their apartments to rail; there are many who are not borne away in sedan chairs [to be married], but merely are left in their apartments to gamble.

[This is a complaint put into the mouth of one grieving over the neglect of women's education in early times. The antiquity of the song is shown by the peculiar rhymes 嫁 and 罵; 抬 and 牌.]

搖大船打大鼓
阿娘喜討新婦
新婦新婦幾時歸
臘月二十四歸
帶得舍子歸
帶得糞糕塌歸
公一份婆一份
姑娘小叔合一份
大也爭小也爭
拿棒來打畜生
畜生打不着
打了新婦好小脚
三尺布攤膏藥

The great ship sails, the big drum is beaten. The mother rejoices that her son has taken a wife. "Bride! bride! when will you come back?" She returns on the 24th day of the 12th moon, bringing with her some provisions in the shape of cakes and puddings. One-third is given to the father, one-third to the mother, and one-third to the sister and younger brother between them. As the brother and sister quarrel, the parents take a big stick to punish the little beasts. But the blow misses the youngsters and lands on the small foot of the bride! So they get a bandage three feet long and bind it up, after anointing it with unguents.

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楊柳樹結疋多
 三人笑年我姊
 七妹二來看
 帶聽稱妹來街
 嫂聽稱妹來街
 堂屋中回金一
 一冷茶送出一
 一肉血不飽根
 一魚菜不飽根
 一碗魚菜不飽
 一碗魚菜不飽
 哥把眼妹招
 哥把眼妹招
 哥把眼妹招
 嫂叫把眼妹招
 嫂叫把眼妹招
 嫂叫把眼妹招
 被說又窄短
 留得又窄短
 哥說又窄短
 哥說又窄短
 嫂說又窄短
 嫂說又窄短
 脚說又窄短
 總說又窄短
 不伸冬裏那
 回手瓜瓜裏那
 娘一正絕有那
 家秋開乏得裏
 花丁蓋冬歌
 瓜

Every one laughs at me for having as many sisters as the willow tree has scars. Every three or five years one of them is married off. Then the seventh and second sisters return to see their elder brother. The latter, hearing they have returned, shoulders his steelyard and goes to Gold Street [market]. When his wife hears they have returned, after the exchange of salutations, she sends them out a cold cup of tea, a bowl of meat, but dripping with blood, a bowl of fish, but with the scales not removed, and a bowl of vegetables with the roots still on! When the elder brother calls "Sisters!..." his wife stops him with a glance. When he asks them to eat, she gives him a kick. When he asks them to stay the night, she says the bed is small and the coverlet narrow —how on earth can they put them up? When he says there is plenty of straw in the field, she says the straw is wanted to cover the winter pumpkins. When he says the pumpkins are all dead, she says they are just in bloom. So the sisters become angry, take their leave, and never return!

高叫一聲守羊人	手巾包飯送與守羊人	難得金家嫂嫂好	別也得血淋淋	十个指頭扇扇切	要吃西邊露水根	老羊不吃東邊草	不等天明要半斤	不等鷄啼要四兩	婆婆討我搓藤繩	公公罰我守羊八百支	公婆有得嫌	丈夫又不愛	海龍王家三小姐
叔姆伯姆上西天	丈夫公婆滾油煎	推脫金家一姓人	發他七日夜長江水	我是你家三小姐帶書人	問我是何人	龍王一見吃一驚	血書帶到大廳上	一條手巾送他拍灰塵	誰人將我帶得血書到	一把破扇與他涼	誰人將我帶得血書到	叫我寫書送與爹爹門	低叫一聲金家嬌

CHINESE DITTIES.

The Dragon-king's third daughter was married into the Gold family. But her husband did not love her and her parents-in-law treated her badly. "My father-in-law made me herd eight hundred sheep during the day, and my mother-in-law made me spin thread—four ounces before cock-crow and half a catty before daybreak! The old sheep did not like the grass on the eastern side, but ate that on the western side, where it was covered with dew. All my ten fingers were lacerated. Fortunately the Gold's aunt was kind to me, and brought provisions in a handkerchief to the shepherd, calling me in a loud voice 'Shepherd' [when at a distance], but [when close at hand] addressing me softly as 'Mrs. Gold.' Fortunately the Gold's aunt was kind to me, and suggested my writing a letter to my father. 'Whoso will take this letter of grief for me will be rewarded with a broken fan, whoso will take this letter of grief for me will be rewarded with a torn handkerchief to wipe off the dust!'"

When the letter reached the Dragon-king's palace, the king was much surprised and asked the messenger who he was. He replied: "I am the messenger from your third daughter." The Dragon-king then, as a punishment, caused the Yangtzu River to overflow for seven days and seven nights, drowning the whole Gold family. The husband and parents-in-law were boiled in oil, but the uncle and aunt were sent up to the Western Paradise.

[The predilection of the sheep for the dewy grass is mentioned to indicate the labour imposed on the shepherd of constantly driving them back.]

又怕山水無盡頭	有心跟着山水走	黑夜聽着山水響	白天聽着鵝鴨叫	吃的大米乾飯鮮魚湯	一賣賣給個使辦的郎	啼娘爲窮賣了我	掃帚繫着黃金鎖
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The golden lock is fastened to the broom. My mother, being poor, sold me. She sold me to be a sailor. My food is rice and fresh fish soup. During the day I listen to the cry of the geese and the ducks; at night I listen to the sound of the rivulets on the hill-sides. I would like to go and follow the course of the rivulets, but fear that they would not lead me to my desired end [i.e., home].

CHINESE DITTIES.

火燄虫亮蓬蓬
 大兒子做裁縫
 二兒子打長工
 兩個媳婦取牙虫
 老媽媽糊燈籠
 白鬍子老頭挑糞桶

The fire-fly's light is very bright. The eldest son is a tailor, the second a farm labourer. Both their wives take the worms out of teeth. The old mother pastes paper lanterns; the white-bearded old father carries the night-soil tub.

[Toothache is (or was) supposed by the Chinese to be caused by worms in the teeth, the extraction (of the worms) being chiefly done by women. This ditty refers to the necessity of each member of a poor family being obliged to engage in some occupation: "if any will not work neither shall he eat."]

若要富
 蒸酒磨豆腐
 第一窮
 趕狗入蓬壺

In order to become rich one should ferment spirits and make bean-curd. The very poorest are those who drive dogs to the foothills.

[In Mei Hsien, Kuangtung, fermenting spirits and making bean-curd are the most lucrative businesses. Driving dogs to the foothills (lit., grassy hills) refers to the hunting, there chiefly done by poor men, who live by selling the flesh and skin of the prey.]

食着摩打罵有
 算來前世係摩修

I receive neither food nor clothes, only beatings and cursings. This is because I sinned in a former existence.

[This ditty originated in the alleged notorious ill-treatment of wives in Mei Hsien.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

飯
蓋
上
塵
菜
打
花

轉
外
家
害
自
家

A wife by returning to her mother's home injures her own. There will be dust on the rice-bowl lid and the vegetables will be flowery (unfit for food).

[Being detained too long in her mother's home she neglects her own. This and the following four songs are current in Mei Hsien.]

亞
姆
種
子
大
婆
享
福

牛
耕
田
馬
食
穀

The ox ploughs the field, but the horse eats the grain. The concubine rears a son, but the great mother enjoys his services.

[The "great mother" is the chief (first) wife of his father. When a man has no son he may take a concubine. By the custom of the Mei Hsien district the concubine's son must serve his "great mother" until her death.]

柑
結
子
吳
王
死

柑
花
開
吳
王
來

When the orange tree blooms King Wu comes. When the orange tree seeds King Wu dies.

["King Wu" is Sun Hao 孫皓, the last emperor (A.D. 264—80) of the Wu Kingdom. The reference is explained as meaning that he succeeded to the throne in the spring and was deposed in the autumn.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

惟孤老慕 一鬚不富 十鬚九富 雷打火燒 一斑不梟 十斑九梟

Of ten turtle doves nine are owls. The one which is not an owl will be destroyed by thunder and burned by fire. Of ten bearded men nine are rich. The one who is not rich will lie in an eccentric's grave.

[孤老 literally, solitary and old; here, by transferred epithet, an eccentric man.]

耕車田住茅屋
年年破壞補不足

I plough a poor field and live in a thatched hut. Year after year I patch up the broken parts.

瘦馬拉搭斃
糠飯糗子活

A bony horse draws a shaky car, and men who live on rice-husks work badly.

[Lê T'ing, Chihli, landowners often go out and trade beyond the frontier, leaving their agriculture to be performed by their employees. This is a hint to the landowners that they should not treat the labourers harshly. By giving them bad food they will only get bad work in return.]

春鱸秋鱸
白眼割穀

[We eat] cod in the spring, roach in the autumn, and "white-eye" at the rice harvest.

[Lê T'ing is a seaside fishing town. The fish named are at their best in the three seasons mentioned. "White-eye," a colloquialism, perhaps refers to the sturgeon. It is other-

CHINESE DITTIES.

wise stated to be the 銀魚, whitebait, or the 黃魚, *acipenser manchuricus*, Basil. Though the song is current in parts of this province, the Pekingese fishmongers cannot identify the fish.]

剔 了 辮 子 怕 張 順	不 剔 辮 子 沒 法 混
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If one does not shave off the queue one cannot mix with the people; if one shaves it off one fears Chang Hsün.

[This is a modern song which has come into being since Chang Hsün's futile attempt to restore the monarchy in 1917. 順 for 動; 剔 has here the rhyme value of 薙.]

作 了 棉 衣 楊 柳 青	作 了 單 衣 水 上 冰
---------------------------------	---------------------------------

By the time one's summer clothes are made ice has formed on the water; by the time one's winter clothes are made the leaves of the willow are green.

[This song, commonly heard in Peking, refers to the time wasted by slothful workers.]

比 上 不 足 比 下 有 餘	回 頭 看 見 推 車 漢	人 家 騎 馬 我 騎 驢	人 家 趕 集 我 也 趕 集
--------------------------------------	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	--------------------------------------

He goes to market, and I do so too, but he rides a horse, and I a donkey. When I look back I see following me a man drawing a cart. [Now I know that] I am not good enough to be compared with the former, but too good to be compared with the latter.

[Current in Ku-an, Chihli.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

點
燈
說
話

作
靴
作
襪

要
媳
婦
幹
麻

哭
哭
涕
涕
要
他
媳
婦

小
小
子
作
門
墩

A little boy sits on the door-step weeping because he has no wife. "Why do you want a wife?" [they ask him.] "A wife would make shoes and socks for me," [he replies] "wait on me and talk to me."

[This is a common song of the little boys of Chiang-peï. 作 for 坐.]

太
后
還
得
走

兩
槐
夾
一
柳

老
猿
還
得
來

兩
柳
夾
一
槐

When there is a *huai* tree between two willows old Yüan will come; when there is one willow between two *huai*'s the empress will go.

[This song belongs to the second and third years of the emperor Hsüan T'ung of the late Ch'ing dynasty. During that time *huai* (*Sophora Japonica*) and willow trees were planted alternately by the road-sides. Yüan is Yüan Shih-k'ai, the first President of the Republic.]

那
時
纔
叫
苦

滿
天
紅
燈
照

二
四
加
一
五

這
時
不
算
苦

The present cannot be considered the worst time. To two fours add one five. When red lanterns illuminate the whole sky, that will be the worst time.

[This song was made after the "Boxer year" (1900). "Two fours" are the Eight Banners of the Manchu régime. "One five" is the five-coloured flag of the Republic, in which each of the five nations under the Chinese Government is represented by a coloured stripe. "Red lanterns" are a sign of revolution.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

霍
啦
啦
啦
兩
三

霍
啦
啦
啦
兩
三

小
妮
來
打
籠
喜

爹
織
布
娘
紡
花

月
奶
奶
黃
吧
吧

When the moon goddess begins to shed her light father sews cloth and mother reels thread, and the girl comes and spins *lungfu*. She spins two or three pieces to the sound *holalala, holalala*.

[*Lung-fu* in olden times was the rush tube put on the shuttle before drawing the thread through with the teeth. *Holalala*, or *hurarara*, is the sound made by the shuttle as it spins round. 三 here has the sound 沙. 妮 may be either a relative or non-relative. This ditty comes from Wei-hui, Honan.]

打 濕 花 鞋 萬 千 針	打 濕 羅 裙 不 打 緊	水 又 深	要 水 喫	柴 又 高	要 柴 燒	嫁 到 高 山 苦 竹 林	接 個 嫂 嫂 心 不 平	拿 給 哥 哥 接 嫂 嫂	一 天 紡 得 十 二 條	拿 給 哥 哥 做 手 巾	一 天 紡 得 十 二 斤	駕 起 了 車 子 紡 棉 花	惟 有 三 姐 不 會 繡	二 姐 繡 的 牡 丹 花	大 姐 繡 的 靈 芝 草	親 家 女 子 會 繡 花	親 家 兒 子 會 跑 馬	對 門 對 戶 打 親 家	竹 斑 楞 苦 竹 杆
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Mottled bamboo! bitter bamboo! He contracts a marriage with his neighbour whose house is opposite to his own. The son of his neighbour can ride and his daughter can embroider. His eldest daughter embroiders designs of *ling-chih* grass; the second embroiders figures of peonies; but the third cannot embroider at all. But she can spin on the spinning-wheel. In one day she spins twelve catties and gives it to her elder brother to make a handkerchief. In one day she spins twelve strips and gives it to her elder brother so that he may marry a wife. But her new sister-in-law is narrow-minded. As soon as she is married she goes up the high mountains covered with bitter bamboos. She wants to get fuel to burn, but it is in high (unattainable) places. She wants water to drink, but the well is very deep. Wetting her apron does not matter, but wetting her embroidered shoes involves the work of a myriad needles (infinite amount of labour).

[Youngsters of three and upwards in Ch'êng-tu, Ssüch'uan, sing this song. *Ling-chih*, the plant of longevity, a species of agaric.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

月光光通透明
 撐把傘看丈人
 丈人丈母不在家
 掀開門簾看見他
 粉紅臉賽桃花
 小小金蓮一拉抓
 等得來年莊稼好
 一頂花轎娶到家

The moon shines brightly over all. I take my umbrella and go to visit my [future] father-in-law. Father- and mother-in-law are not at home. I lift the door-screen and catch sight of her [my future bride]. Her face in its fresh ruddiness rivals the peachflower. Her tiny "golden lilies" [feet] are so small that a touch would make her fall. If next year's harvest is good, I will take her to my home in an embroidered sedan-chair.

[Current in Fêng-ch'êng Hsien, Kiangsi.]

我娃乖吃媽奶
 爾爹要錢不回來
 莊子又深狗又歪
 那個賤人敢進來

My infant is at my breast. His father is away dunning a creditor, and does not come back. But our house stands far back, and our dog is fierce; so no disreputable person will dare to approach.

[Current in Hsi-an, Shensi. 歪 is a colloquialism for 兇.]

人行時時又胖又白 走到人家就說是
 一個客
 (借錢五十) (行時人借)
 (就是一百) (人家答應)
 (下個月還你) (行時人說)
 (好說好說) (人家答)
 人倒霉時又瘦又黑 走到人家就說是
 一個賊
 (借錢五十)
 (一個都沒得)
 (下個月還你)
 (胡說胡說)

CHINESE DITTIES.

A man in luck is fā and whít. When he goes to another's home they describe him as a guest.

"Lend me fifty cash," he says.

"Here are a hundred," they reply.

"I will repay you next month," he says.

"Very good, very good," they reply.

A man down in his luck is thin and black. When he goes to another's house, they describe him as a thief.

"Lend me fifty cash," he says.

"We don't possess a single one," they reply.

"I will repay you next month," he says.

"Nonsense, nonsense," they reply.

[Current in Kiukiang, Kiangsi.]

丈夫有隔一隻手

爺有娘有趕不上自己

哥有嫂有視如沒有

Elder brother has money, sister-in-law has money, but I myself have as good as nothing. Father has money, mother has money, but I myself do not attain to the possession of any. My husband has money, but none of it reaches his wife's hand.

[This is also from Kiukiang. It is supposed to advocate the economic independence of married women.]

幾時到我家鄉

黃河流水鳴湯湯

黃河岸上洗衣裳

黃利黃黃利黃

"*Huang li huang, Huang li huang!*" I wash clothes on the bank of the Yellow River. The water of the Yellow

CHINESE DITTIES.

River flows babbling by;—when shall I too return to my home?

[“*Huang li huang*” is the name of the song. It was composed in the last year of Chia Ching of the Ming dynasty by Lu Jan of Hsün Hsien, Honan, and printed in the *Mieh mêng chi*, “Collection by a Small Fly.” Although not now heard in the district, it is preserved in the literary encyclopædias.]

娶
个
花
花
娘
樓
樓
我

跟
狗
睡
狗
咬
我

跟
貓
睡
貓
抓
我

沒
娘
的
孩
怎
麼
過

小
白
鷄
上
柴
禾
架

A small white hen flies up on to the pile of firewood. Without a mother, how can a child live? If I sleep with the cat, the cat will scratch me; if I sleep with the dog, the dog will bite me. I must take a young and beautiful step-mother to look after me.

[Current in Ch'ing-ho, Chihli, and Lin-ch'ing, Shantung. By “taking a step-mother,” the youngster indicates his wish for his father's re-marriage.]

上
去
不
該
不
下
來

不
該
上
燈
台

知
道
下
不
來

偷
油
吃
下
不
來

小
老
鼠
上
燈
台

A little mouse goes up on to the lamp-frame in order to eat the oil, but cannot get down again. If he had known that he could not get down, he would not have gone up. But, having gone up, he ought to come down again.

[This song which, like most of these ditties has several variations, is current in the same districts as the preceding

CHINESE DITTIES.

one. The Chinese text here omits the usual ending: "Fetch the cat to help her down."

你是兄弟我是哥
 打一壺酒倆喝
 喝醉了打老婆
 打死老婆怎麼過
 有錢的娶個花花婆
 沒錢的娶個懶老婆
 吃吃一鍋拉拉一鍋
 放屁打成鑼

You are my younger brother; I am your elder brother: let us have a kettle of wine together. When we are drunk, we beat our wives; but, if they die from our beatings, how shall we get our living? If we have money, we will marry beautiful ones; if we are poor, we will marry ugly ones. Drink! drink a jug! Bring! bring a jag! Give a belch, and strike the gong!

[Current in Lin-ch'ing, this song is a hit at the dissipated habits of the Shantungese. The phrases 吃吃一鍋拉拉一鍋 taken together mean beginning another thing before finishing the previous one, here referring to the hypothetical re-marriages.]

大脚大
 大脚大
 大脚好
 大脚好
 陰天下雨不害怕
 陰天下雨不害怕

Big feet [although] big [are good!] Big feet [although] big [are good!] On dark, rainy days they do not fear [being steady.] Big feet are good! Big feet are good! On dark, rainy days they do not stumble.

[This and the next are from the Wu-ch'ing district, Chihli. "Big" is used relatively to the size of the small cramped feet of women.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

大白豆做飯甜

養活閨女不值錢

三觔豆腐二兩酒

送他婆婆大門口

婆婆出來嫌脚大

女婿說(留下罷)

梳油頭帶紅花兒

要那們點小脚幹什麼)

The food, though made [only] of large white beans, is sweet. The girl has been cheaply reared: three catties of bean-curd and two ounces of wine [will buy her as a wife.] She is sent to the front door of her mother-in-law's house. Her mother-in-law comes out, but objects to her big feet. Her future husband [*lit.*, the son-in-law] [however] says: "Let her stay; she will dress her hair with oil and put a red flower in it. What do you want such dots of feet for?"

[The marital relation ("in-law") dates from the time of betrothal.]

亮月亮

家家場上白相相

撮板凳去乘涼

厨房下煥餅香

魚又賤肉又強

鷄鴨鵝蛋自家生

粉皮素菜湊湊十來樣

亮月亮

搭涼棚

涼棚底下一隻大雄雞

稱稱看二斤半

賣賣看二錢半

籬米籬得斗半

阿婆吃得碗半

媳婦吃得粒半

初一驕到月半

The moon is very bright, and shines very white on all the threshing-floors. I take a stool and go out for an airing. The crisping pancake in the kitchen smells good. The fish and meat are both cheap [*lit.*, the fish is cheap and the meat good (see note).] The hens', geese', and ducks' eggs are home-laid, and with the vermicelli and vegetables there are altogether about ten kinds of eatables.

The moon is very bright. I put up an awning of matting. Under the awning there is a b' cock. On weighing him I see that he scales $2\frac{1}{2}$ catties. I will be able to sell him for 25 cents. With this I can buy a peck and a half of rice. My mother-in-law will eat one bowl and a half; but the wife

CHINESE DITTIES.

[I] will get only a grain and a half. Thus I endure hardships half the time [*lit.*, from the first to the fifteenth of the month.]

[The price named would seem to indicate that the song belongs to thirty or more years ago. The ditty is a characteristic one in good style and alludes to the oppression of the people by their officials. 相 for 浪; 掇 should be read 得; 煥 bright, here a localism: to make crisp by baking; 強 a localism for 廉價; to make the rhyme correct 生 should be 養.]

窗 外 是 射 呀
張 官 老 呵
你 怎 麼 不 進 來 呢
怕 狗 子 咬 呵
吾 起 你 打 打 罷
臭 感 自 好 呵
你 拿 的 莫 兒 呀
拿 的 乾 乾 棗 呵
你 怎 麼 不 吃 呢
莫 有 牙 咬 呵
吾 起 你 點 水 泡 泡 罷
臭 感 自 好 呵
你 背 的 莫 兒 呀
背 破 的 皮 襖 呵
你 怎 麼 不 穿 呢
怕 蟲 子 咬 呀
吾 起 你 捉 捉 罷
臭 感 自 好 呵

“Who is that outside the window?” “Old Chang.”
“Why don’t you come in?” “I am afraid of being bitten by the dog.” “Let me drive him away for you.” “Very good.”
“What have you in your hand?” “Dried dates.” “Why don’t you eat them?” “Because I have no teeth.” “I will fetch water for you to boil them in.” “Very good.” “What is that over your shoulders?” “A worn-out fur jacket.” “Why do you not wear it.” “I am afraid of being bitten by the lice.” “Let me catch them for you.” “Very good.”

[Current in Wên Têng and Jung Hsien, Shantung. 射 for 誰; 起 for 給; 臭感自好 met. for 那很好; 莫兒 = 甚麼].

毛 兒 毛 兒 拉 捻 子
回 頭 看 三 板 子

“Thieves! thieves! catch them!” Whoever looks round gets three slaps!

[毛兒 refers to the 長毛賊, or long-haired robbers (T'ai-p'ings). Têng Hsien formerly suffered from the attention of these rebels to such an extent that the mere mention of the word “robbers” caused fear in the hearts of the in-

CHINESE DITTIES.

habitants. Thus, in the reigns of Hsien Fêng, T'ung Chih, and Kuang Hsü of the late Ch'ing dynasty groups of children when at play would join hands and sit down in a circle. One would walk round outside the circle singing this ditty, and anyone who turned round at the mention of the word received three slaps with a shoe.]

女 木
大 大
填 作
房 梁

A tree, when full-grown, [is good for] use as a beam. A woman, when full-grown, is married [only] as a secondary wife.

[From Têng Hsien, Honan. In this district women are betrothed at an unusually early age (even for China), so that if a woman is late in getting engaged the husband probably has already married his first wife, and she becomes only his secondary wife or concubine. Trees should not be felled too soon, nor women married too late.]

俺 行 媳 公 白 黑
們 路 婦 公 老 老
做 君 後 犁 鵠 鵠
的 子 邊 地 婆
好 莫 拾 婆
莊 笑 土 母
稼 話 拉 拔

Black crows! white crows! While the father-in-law is ploughing, and the mother-in-law uprooting the weeds, the daughter-in-law follows behind picking out the hard lumps. You gentlemen travelling by, do not laugh at us. We are working for a good harvest!

[By the custom of the Têng Hsien district a father-in-law scarcely ever sees his daughter-in-law, but among the agriculturists the field-work necessitates their meeting; hence this ditty. "White crows" are the "gentleman travellers," who are as little desired by the agriculturalists whilst engaged on their labours as the black ones.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

青布衫芝蔴藍
 暴做媳婦實煩難
 樓上量米大奶奶
 河頭淘米婆來張
 井裏挑水小姑娘
 厨房上竈小親娘
 聲聲口口還要說
 僞偷米送爹娘
 爹娘真窮勿算窮
 十扇樓窗九扇紅
 休臉哥哥全僞帶個信去
 吃得僞媒酒爛肚腸
 帶得僞媒錢做道場

I wear black clothes and carry a rough basket. The rôle of a new wife is very hard to fill. When I measure the rice in the loft my husband's mother is with me, and when I wash the rice in the river my mother-in-law is with me. When I draw water from the well my brother-in-law is with me, and when I cook in the kitchen my husband's younger sister is with me. But still they say that I steal rice and send it to my parents. My parents are not really so poor as all that! Nine out of ten of their upstairs lattices are painted red. So I beg my elder brother, who is losing face [by this action of my parents-in-law] to take a message to those who drank my marriage wine [viz., the match-makers] [saying may it] break their intestines [and asking them] to keep my marriage purchase-money to pay priests to recite canons [over their corpses.]

[Current in Yü hang, Haug-chou Fu, Chêkiang.]

算命燒香哭
 女婿外孫鷄

Divination, burning incense, weeping. Sons-in-law, grandsons, hens.

Current in Chêkiang. Indicates the chief "events" in the life of a woman in the olden days.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

滾蛋
兩足持不住
小鼠持小蛋
大鼠持大蛋
紅薯亂竊雞雞蛋
大小老鼠喫紅薯
大老鼠小老鼠

Rats and mice! They both [come to eat] the sweet potatoes; when the sweet potatoes are all broken up they steal the eggs. The rats take the large eggs, the mice the small ones. Those they cannot hold in their two paws they roll away.

[Current in Fang Ling, Hupei. Refers to official oppression of the people.]

家婆還在睡搖窩
打到家婆屋內坐
接母親我打鑼
先生我後生哥

I was born first, my elder brother afterwards! At my mother's wedding I beat the gong! I beat it until I reached her apartment in my maternal grandmother's house. My grandmother was still in her cradle!

[From Huang Mei, Hupei. 鑼 = 祖母. In Kiangsu a kind of wooden bucket, shaped like a Chinese wash-basin, but double as deep, is used as a cradle. Straw is put in it for warmth, and by placing a brick under one corner it can be rocked. It is commonly called 窩 *wo*¹ or *ou*³, a nest, and is generally used in winter; in summer it is changed for a rock-basket, so as to get the benefit of the cool air. The 搖窩 mentioned in the song is probably identical with this. 搖窩 the following, also from Kiangsu: 爺十三娘十四哥哥十五我十六, My father is 13, my mother 14, my elder brother 15, and I am 16!]

有後娘就有後爹
南山頂上滾穀輪車

CHINESE DITTIES.

On the top of South Hill the grain-cart rolls along [easily down.] If there is a step-mother, then there is a step-father.

[From the Chiao Tung district, Shantung. Sung by sons and daughters. Refers to natural sequence, cruelty practised by a step-mother is also practised by a step-father.]

小孩兒睡蓋狗被
狗被有革蚤
咬的小孩兒亂得叟

The child sleeps, covered by the dog-coverlet. The dog-coverlet has fleas, which bite the child to distraction.

[From Wên Têng and Jung Hsien, Shantung. Sung by mothers to lull their babies to sleep. A dog-coverlet is probably a bed-cover made of dog-skin. 革 should be 蓋. 得叟 = 抖擻, to rouse.]

剃新頭貼新對
吃了沽支長一歲

Our heads freshly shaven, new couplets pasted [on the doors,] we eat meat dumplings, and are older by another year! [Same districts 沽支 = 餃子, eaten on New Year's eve.]

糖瓜祀竈年來到
閨女耍花小子耍爆
老婆子耍裏脚
老頭子耍氈帽

CHINESE DITTIES.

Sugared melon sacrificed to the God of the Stove—the New Year has arrived! The girls want flowers, the children fire-crackers, the old women want their feet [re-] bound, the old men felt caps.

[Same districts. The sacrifice named was performed on the 23rd day of the 12th moon (old style).]

窮神窮神
汝與吾有何尋
黑忽忽的門頭
爲什麼不尋別人
恐怕你入了吾的門
偏偏的就入了吾的門
自從你入了吾的門
事事把身跟
步步不離身
親戚朋友闔着眼看
有了鬧事也無人打問(此是告窮神歌)
東君東君
貧怨自己貧
何從怨別人
你一好吃二好飲
就是賜你一個金獅子
銀麒麟
洩錢的母猪
也不你胡打尋(此是窮神答歌)

God of Poverty! God of Poverty! What grudge have you against me? [And mine is] such a dark door [too!] Why do you not go and seek someone else? I feared that you would enter my door, and you have really done so. Since you entered my door, you follow me in everything I do and dog my steps, not leaving me [for an instant.] My relatives and friends take no notice of me, and when I am in trouble no one comes to enquire [fearing to be implicated.] (This is the song accusing the God of Poverty).

Sir! Sir! Being poor, you complain of your poverty. [But] why blame others? For one thing, you are too fond of eating; for another, too fond of drinking. Even if you were to have bestowed on you a gold lion, a silver unicorn, and a money-producing sow, they would be insufficient to meet your extravagances. (This is the song conveying the God of Poverty's answer).

[From Kao I and Lin Ch'êng districts, Chihli.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

穿 嫁 穿 嫁
衣 漢 金 人
吃 嫁 戴 嫁
飯 漢 銀 人

Re-marry! re-marry! and wear gold and silver! Marry a man! marry a man! and have clothes and food!

[Current in Huang An, Hsiao Huai, and other districts in Hupei. 嫁 = 醮, re-marriage of widows, which is still opposed to Chinese ideas of propriety.]

天 棚 魚 缸 石 榴 樹
先 生 肥 狗 胖 丫 頭

Sun screens, large fish-jars, pomegranate trees; blind musicians, fat dogs, stout maid servants.

[These are signs of respectability in the Manchu families of Peking.]

小 驢 兒 跑 的 快
一 張 卓 子 八 碗 菜
叫 小 三 提 酒 來
你 一 盞 我 一 盞
咱 倆 拜 成 乾 弟 兄

Little donkey, running so fast! A table; eight courses. Call Hsiao San to bring some wine. A cup for you, a cup for me! Thus we two become sworn brothers!

[Was popular about ten years ago in Chang Tê, Honan. At the present time friendships are still cemented over cups of wine at an "eight-dish dinner."]

CHINESE DITTIES.

一个和尚挑水喫
两个和尚抬水喫
三个和尚水也沒得喫

One monk draws water to drink. Two monks carry water [in a jar] on a pole. Three monks can get no water to drink.

[Current in Wu Chiang, Kiangsu. 也 should be read as 吁, alas! 沒 read nasal *p'ing shêng*, in books commonly written 無. The allusion is to the pressure on the means of subsistence due to unemployment, whether of private individuals, priests, or officials.]

蟋蟀嘖嘖叫
小官心裏耍
翻轉石頭撲撲跳
一跳跳到城隍廟
城隍菩薩儕跌倒

When the cricket is crying plaintively the children want to catch it. They dig up a stone, which rolls down until it reaches the temple of the City God and knocks him over!

[From Wu Chiang, Kiangsu. 蟋蟀 in the North 蟋蟀兒; 嘖 is the chirp it makes; 小官 = 兒童; 撲撲 should be read 僕僕; 儕 should be 擠. The idea is that the children get poisoned by the beetles and the parents blame the god!]

莪眉豆生長莖
花有紅白葉是青
有朝一日狂風起
沒見花葉只見莖

The artemisia grows on its long stalk. Its flowers are white and red and its leaves green. One day a gale springs up; its flowers and leaves are torn off, and only its stalk remains.

[From Huang Pei in Hupei.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

天上大星排不勻
 地下小婦難做人
 一升麥子擔三升
 公公罵婆婆打
 還說小婦給人家
 剪下青髮弔死咱
 不要金裝無須銀埋
 留得美名千萬載

The great stars in the sky are not evenly distributed. A young wife finds life hard. When she grinds a pint of wheat [and produces only] three pints [of grain] her father-in-law curses her and her mother-in-law beats her. Moreover, they say that she steals the meal to give to other people. So she cuts off her black hair and hangs herself with it. She does not desire to be adorned with gold nor buried with silver; but she will leave a good name for endless ages.

[Current in Huang Kang, Hupei.]

小板橙土地台
 嫁个姑爺不成材
 好吃酒好打牌
 半夜三更不回來
 升升米把把柴
 祖奶奶過不來

A small bench! An earthen terrace! I have married a good-for-nothing! He loves drinking and gambling, and does not return home till the third watch of the night. A pint or so of rice, a bundle or so of firewood—on these I cannot subsist.

[From Yünnan Fu.]

水淹北京城
 蛤礮上了坑

When the floods covered Peking city the clam-shells went up on to the *k'ang*.

[In the reign of Tao Kuang this ditty was sung in Peking. 淹 is used for 烟. At that time, the opium-pipe was introduced, and large numbers of people lay on their *k'angs* smoking opium. Of the large number of accessories many were made of the shells of bivalves; hence the allusion to clam-shells.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

鬼子有點不得勁
光緒錢改十字
兩把頭大拉翅

[At the time when] the two top-knots [of earlier times expanded into] the large wings widespread, and the figure 10 on the [earlier] coins in the reign of Kuang Hsü was changed [into the larger form], the foreign devils become a little weaker.

[Current in Peking in the 24th and 25th years (1898-9) of the reign of Kuang Hsü, 兩把頭大拉翅 refers to the changed head-dress of Manchu women. The use of this head-dress is of early date, but formerly it was small and made of their own hair in the shape of two top-knots tied together. Later it became larger, was more generally made of false hair, and assumed the shape of two wings, one on each side of the head. The change on the coins was due to the dislike, during a period of strong anti-foreign feeling, to the resemblance of the Chinese character for ten to the Christian cross, and it was accordingly changed from 十 to the larger form 拾.]

看看洋人難不難
掀鐵路拔線桿

Dig up the rails, pull up the telegraph poles, and see whether the foreigners won't be in difficulties!

[From the Sha Ho and Yung Nien districts, Chihli. Both this and the last originated in the same anti-foreign sentiment,—this in Boxer, the former in pre-Boxer times.]

要命的糖果救命的扁食

The fatal preserve; the life-giving mince-pies.
 [From Lung-p'ing Hsien, Chihli. 糖果 in the North are called 糖瓜. 扁食 are 餃子, pastry containing mince-meat. By the custom of that *hsien* 糖瓜 are used in sacrificing to the Kitchen God. At that time 23rd day of the 12th moon) dinners for overdue debts begin to appear, so the 糖瓜 are termed "fatal." But on the 1st moon 餃子 are eaten, and being associated with a happier time when dinners can come no longer are termed "life-giving." The adjectives are supposed to be used by the debtors themselves.]

娶過老婆的大漢子
 五尺高的漢子
 三尺長的辮子

A queue three feet long, a man five feet high:—a fully-grown married man!

[Also from Lung-p'ing. Refers to the very early age of marriage in that district. When married a man, though very young, is already known as an adult, but is not considered as such before marriage: even if he remain a generation unmarried he is still looked upon as an infant!]

好夫婦纔生好娃娃
 女會管家
 男會讀書
 男家莫望好賠嫁
 女家莫望門戶大
 女大當嫁
 男大當婚
 對門戶搭親家
 紅雞公綠尾巴

CHINESE DITTIES.

A red cock with a green tail! If the status is equal they [the man and maid] may be married. When a man is grown up he should marry a wife; when a girl reaches womanhood she should have a husband. The girl's family should not look to the husband's status; the husband's family should not reckon on the wife's dowry. If the husband is a scholar and the wife can manage her household it will be a good match and they will have fine children!

[From Hsi-ch'ung Hsien, Ssüch'uan. A red cock with a green tail is a very fine looking bird (a fine man); though perhaps the green tail indicates the wife!]

三個	兩個	一個	
媳婦	媳婦	媳婦	
壞家	動家	姑到	X
窩	伙	過	

With one daughter-in-law the family may be tranquil; with two daughters-in-law quarrels will take place; but with three daughters-in-law the family will be broken up.

[From Nan-chang Hsien, Hupei. Indicates the improbability of harmony between the wife and an increasing number of daughters-in-law. 務 and 窩 are interchangeable sounds.]

除非	要得	除非	要得
除了	南漳	殺去	南漳
張書	不窮	董聘	安
農		三	

If we desire to make Nan-chang safe, we must kill Tung P'in-san: if we desire to make Nan-chang rich, we must drive Chang Shu-nung away.

[Tung, at the end of the Ch'ing dynasty, was Collector of Education Fees, by appropriating which he made himself and his family rich, so the people of Nan-chang hated him to his very bones. In the 辛亥 year (1671), when the 革命 revolutionaries arose, he was killed by the people of his own village, who cast his corpse into the mountain stream. Chang

CHINESE DITTIES.

also was a corrupt member of the gentry class and a man of capital, which he loaned to merchants at great profit. He constantly resorted to litigation to enforce his claims, so also was hated by his own villagers. This is a good type of the more modern style of ditties.]

西 有 水 鏡 莊	東 有 徐 庶 里	勝 地 甲 荆 襄	南 漳 南 漳
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Nan-chang! Nan-chang! It is the best place in Ching-hsiang. To the East is the native place of Hsü Shu; to the West there is the village of Shui Ching.

[Nan-chang is to the west of Hsiang-yang, a *fu* in the An-Hsiang-Yün-Ching circuit, Hupei, and known in the Chin dynasty as 荆. Hsiang-yang is a very productive district, 800 li in area, and an important place on the road to Ssüch'uan and Shansi. 水鏡 or 水鏡先生 is the style (taken from the name of the village) of Ssü-ma Hui whose other style was Tê-ts'ao. Both he and Hsü Shu lived in the time of the Three Kingdoms (A.D. 220-65.) About two *li* to the east of Nan-chang is Hsü Shu's hall of ancestors, marking the site of his native village. To the west is the village of Shui Ching, which was Ssü-ma Hui's favourite resort for walking and fishing, and now noted for its historical associations and fine scenery.]

當 乾 賣 盡 並 下 獄	有 之 一 日 事 臨 頭	定 要 上 上 衙 門 裡	家 有 幾 畝 莊 田 地
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When a man has a few acres of agricultural land, he [being purse-proud] is fond of litigation. But the day comes when a catastrophe happens [he meets one more powerful than he], and he has to sell all his property and is put in prison.

[Also from Nan-chang. 有之一日 generally = 有朝一日.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

年成不好樹皮也喫得
年成好嫌麥黑

When the harvest is good we grumble at the wheat being black ; but when the harvest is bad we even eat bark.

[In the Chang district droughts are frequent. In the worst times, the bark of the 榆 elm tree is ground up, boiled, and eaten to stay hunger. The ditty preaches contentment and economy : if all classes economized, there would be no scarcity and no complaints.]

清末無白丁
明末無青草

At the end of the Ming dynasty there was no green grass ; at the end of the Ch'ing dynasty there were no ignorant people.

[From Fêng-t'ien Fu. According to the Chinese saying, in the Ming dynasty the people suffered from heaven's fault, not from their own ; in the Ch'ing, from their own, namely, allowing bad officials to be employed in the government of the country. "No green grass"—very much impoverished. "No ignorant people" means that members of even the lower classes could be appointed officials and so belong to the "scholar" class.]

胡漢相攪二百秋
胡攪漢攪胡

CHINESE DITTIES.

The Mongols trouble the Chinese; the Chinese trouble the Mongols. The Mongols and Chinese have troubled each other for two hundred years [lit., autumns.]

[Also from Fêng-t'ien. The reference is to the chronic animosity between the North and the South. How this idea obsessed the native mind was illustrated in the reign of Ch'ien Lung. As that monarch was going through the Tung-chih Mén of Peking on his way to Jêhol, the wind blew his hat off. As the wind blew from the north, it was taken as an omen of trouble from the Mongols, the prediction being fulfilled in the person of Chang K'o Erh, the Mongol Prince who rebelled against China during his reign. After peace had been arranged, Chang came to Peking to be tribute, but was treacherously murdered by the Chinese—an act which led to further Mongol revolutions and wars.]

窮 漢 子 就 翻 手	黃 牛 遍 地 走	九 九 加 一 九	八 九 雁 來	七 九 河 開	春 打 六 九 頭
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The Spring [sacrifice is] at the beginning of the sixth nine. At the seventh nine the river opens. At the eighth nine the wild goose comes. At the ninth nine plus one nine the yellow ox everywhere ploughs [lit, walks] the fields, and the poor *han tzü* [native, Chinese] can then make a living.

[From Fêng-t'ien, but varies in different parts. From the winter solstice (11th day of 11th moon) to the beginning of spring (generally the 26th day of 12th moon) is 45 days (five nines), the spring sacrifice being on the first day of the sixth nine, *i.e.*, on the 46th day after the winter solstice. The seventh and eighth nines are 63 and 72 days respectively after the winter solstice, the ninth nine plus one nine being 90 days after that epoch. 翻手 lit., to turn (use) his hands.]

初 一 叩 頭	三 十 祭 神	二 十 九 糊 香 斗	二 十 八 把 麵 發	二 十 七 宰 年 雞	二 十 六 化 豬 肉	二 十 五 做 豆 腐	二 十 四 寫 對 紙	二 十 三 灶 王 爺 上 天	過 了 臘 八 就 是 年	小 娃 娃 你 別 饑
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CHINESE DITTIES.

Little baby, don't be greedy! After the 8th day of the 12th moon the [new] year [will soon be] here. On the 23rd the Stove God goes up to heaven; on the 24th we write [New Year] couplets. On the 25th we make bean-curd. On the 26th we melt pork. On the 27th we kill the year-fowl for sacrifice. On the 28th we raise [with yeast, i.e., make ready to be eaten] the vermicelli. On the 29th we paste [new paper round] the rice-measure. On the eve of the 30th we worship the gods. On the first [day of the New Year] we *k'ou-t'ou* [kowitz: offer New Year congratulations.]

[Fêng-t'ien in winter is a very cold land, where pork freezes as soon as killed and has to be thawed before use. This is done by heating over a fire or by soaking in hot water. In poor villages, bean-curd is not usually eaten except at the New Year, for the sake of economy. Pork is bought before the 23rd day because it is then cheaper, and is kept in cold storage until the 26th. 香斗 is a rice-measure made of bamboo splints and pasted on the outside with paper. It is filled with rice, in which incense sticks are stuck. The rectangular ones are called 斗, the round ones 爐.]

十七八的小守寡	房上的磚地下的瓦	哭的丈夫多嚙來	葫蘆花滿街白
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Calabash flower! making the whole street white! I weep [wondering] when my husband will come [return.] Tiles on the roof, bricks on the ground; [but I am] a perpetual widow at [only] seventeen or eighteen years of age!

[Current among young people in Shên-tsê Hsien, Chihli. Tiles and bricks are complementary to the roof and ground respectively; similarly a husband should not be without a wife nor a wife without a husband. "The whole street white" conveys the idea of uniformity and completeness, which should also be the case in married life, but the young widow, having no husband, is by contrast incomplete.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

有閨女不開菜園子
 有小子不樞燒餅籃子

Where there is an unmarried woman [in the family] do not have a vegetable garden; where there are young boys do not carry a wheat-cake basket on your arm!

[Same district. The first sentence implies trouble from the young men who come to buy vegetables and may flirt with the girl; the second refers to wheat-cake selling being a poor business and the sellers notorious liars and cheats, so that it is to be feared the boys will follow in their father's footsteps. 樞 more correctly 攤.]

够你娘們過一冬
 切一籃打半升
 奶奶去地切穀穗
 哦哦娃臄睡

So! so! baby is going to sleep! While she sleeps grand-mama will go to the field to cut some ears of corn. When she has cut a basketful she will beat out as much as half a pint [of grain]—enough to enable you ladies to pass the winter.

[Current in Honan. This is sung by the grandmother as she lulls the baby to sleep, the mother being engaged on other business. The half-pint of grain is of course a daily supply. "You ladies" are the mother and the baby. 够 should be written 夠.]

小白雞穀讀水
 奶奶殺鶴我拽腿
 我說割塆增肉喫
 奶奶說
 小近嘍

CHINESE DITTIES.

["Grandmama says:] 'Small white chicken [clucking like] the sound of bubbling water!' [I say:] 'Grandmama, you kill the crane; I will hold its legs.' I say [further:] 'Cut some top-knot meat for me to eat.' Grandmama says: 'Little glutton!'"

Also from Honan, 穀讀 onomatopœic, sound of boiling water. 拽 = 拉. The chattering child is compared to a clucking chicken. The crane is a household pet, not to be killed. Its top-knot is said to be poisonous, on account of its feeding on scorpions, snakes, etc. The crane is usually found only in the homes of wealthy families. Young girls' foreheads (sometimes their ears or arms) are stained with blood taken from the top-knot. This is done at five or six years of age, and if it remains it is regarded as a proof of virginity (known as 守宮砂).

小學生上學堂
 讀詩書念文章
 紅旗插到咱門上
 你看排塲不排塲

Little scholar! going to school to learn poetry and study literature! When the red banner floats over our door see if we shan't be *distingué*!

[From Honan. If a member of a family passed the Palace Examination (under the old system) and became a 狀元, *Optimus*, a red banner was displayed at the street door and glory was reflected upon the whole district. 排塲 = 榮耀. The old name for 紅旗 was 錦標.]

拍豆莢上南坡
 南坡南好收田
 一畝地打兩石
 粗羅羅
 細羅斷
 掌櫃喫
 夥契看
 這個莊稼真難幹

Crack the bean-shells [and rake the shells] on to South Hill. Go and reap the crops on the south side of South Hill. One acre yields two bushels. First use the coarse sieve to

CHINESE DITTIES.

sift the black wheat flour; then the fine one to sift the white wheat flour. The manager eats [the cakes]; the labourers look on! Truly this agricultural business is hard to manage [the lot of us labourers is hard.]

[Also from Honan. 斷 is "especially fine." 夥契 is better than 夥計 the usual character in colloquial expressions.]

新春大發財
元寶滾進來
大元寶買田地
小元寶做生意
元寶滾到雞舍頭
雞子整畚斗
元寶滾到樓梯頭
存穀存米百廿樓
元寶滾到豬欄頭
飼豬大如牛
七十斤油
八十斤頭
用鉢頭置脂油
此此快快一年油上頭

At this Spring-time in the New Year [we, the singers, wish you, the lord or master,] great riches. May the gold "shoes" roll in! With the large ones you can buy real property; with the small ones you can open a business! May the "shoes" roll as far as your hen roosts and you have rice measures full of eggs! May they roll up to your lofts and your storerooms be full of husked and unhusked grain! May they roll to your pigsties and you rear pigs as big as oxen, [yielding] 70 catties of fat and with heads 80 catties in weight! As the fat dissolves in the large iron pan, hissing and spluttering, may the year make you rich as quickly as the oil melts!

[Current in Wu, Lü, and other districts of E. Chêkiang. 此此 煨煨 is the sound of oil frying. Sung as a New Year carol by children to get cakes and dumplings.]

房先生(書吏)
小隊子(衙役)
花眼圈(地痞)
大八旗(旗人)

Mr House (a clerk); small "copper" (an office constable); "painted-eyes" (vagabonds); Great Eight Banners (Manchus).

CHINESE DITTIES.

[Dates from the reign of Kuang Hsü of the Ch'ing dynasty; prevalent in Fêng-t'ien Province, in Hai-Ch'êng, Ying-k'ou, and other *hsien*. The four classes mentioned were those especially dreaded by the people.]

漲大水漫城牆
賭博的光棍賣婆娘
不賣婆娘肚子饑
賣了婆娘受孤寂
哇哇哭要奶吃
各尋各在那裡

The great flood overflows the city wall. The gambling vagabonds sell their wives. If they do not sell their wives their stomachs will be an-hungered. If they do sell them they are then solitary and sad. The babies cry, wanting milk to drink. Each party seeks the other, but where are they [to be found?]

[From Sui Hsien, Hupei. Wives are commonly called 婆娘. 哇哇 should be 娃娃 to make the sense consistent.]

尖嘴老賣燈草
賣到河邊狗子咬
回到家雞也啄犬也爪
與爹說
爹說未咬好
與媽說
媽說還要咬
妻嫂拿棍趕出來
說看你那裡跑

Old Pointed-mouth! selling lamp-wicks! In selling them he goes as far as the river-bank, where the dogs bark at him. When he returns home the chickens peck him and the dogs claw him. He tells his father. His father says: "It were better for them not to bite you." He tells his mother. His mother says: "They will probably bite you again!" His wife and his sister-in-law take sticks and drive him out, saying: "We'll see where you'll run to!"

[From Hsieh-ma Ho, Pao-kiang Hsien, Hupei. An example of want of sympathy shown to the poor in China.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

人背時鬼推磨
黃鼠狼爬到雞籠上坐

When one's luck is bad, the devil turns the corn-mill, and the yellow marmot climbs up and sits on the hen-coop.

[From Pao-k'ang, Hupei. Refers to the ruin of families in that district from war and looting. There being no one in the house the devil does not fear to enter, and the marmot sits on the top of the empty hen-coop instead of going inside it, as it would if it contained something for it to steal.]

未討親想討親
討了親打悔心

When one is unmarried, one longs to be married; when one is married, one repents.

[From Wên Chou, Chêkiang.]

大雨化化下
糧米茗漲價
小孩要粥喝
兩口子就打架

The heavy rain comes pattering down. Corn, rice, and tea rise in price. The children want their porridge; husband and wife quarrel.

[From Fêng T'ien. In that province, in the 7th and 8th moons, the price of rice, etc., depends upon the rainfall. Cf. 窮吵餓鬪 (discord) 柴米夫妻 (harmony). 化化 is the onomatopœic sound of heavy rain. It has here the fourth tone, but in Peking 花花 in the first tone is used.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

小
螞
蚱
唧
唧
叫
小
螞
蚱
唧
唧
叫
咱
娘
們
苦
熬
着
多
會
熬
到
你
爹
來
了
蒸
窩
窩
吃
黏
糕

Little grasshopper! chirping away! We, mother and child, are worried with our troubles. [But] we must endure them until your father comes, [when we] will have steamed cakes and dumplings to eat [lit., steam cakes and eat dumplings.]

[From Chi Hsien, Chihli. The husband has gone out to trade; the mother leads the child to the field where she works, and sings this ditty to comfort herself and enjoin patience until the father returns with the food. 窩窩 are made of maize; 黏糕 contain beans and dates, or if plain are eaten with sugar. 熬 = 忍耐. 'Little grasshopper' refers to the restless child.]

青
石
頭
响
叮
噹
我
爹
賣
我
不
商
量
賣
的
銀
錢
還
了
賬
不
與
小
奴
做
賠
枋

Piece of granite! clinking *ting-tang!* My father sold me without consulting me. The money he acquired by selling me paid off his debts and was not appropriated for buying anything for my dowry

[The first six characters are an introductory humming, referring to the father's hard nature 賠枋, to complete the house, by providing the newly-wedded wife, according to custom, with the service of waiting-maids, etc. 枋 should be 房 陪房 is the same expression as 陪嫁 in the South. 枋, originally 柄, read by some 方, which is very close to the southern sound of 房. This and the two following ditties are from S.E. Shansi.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

炭鏟把顛倒安
 娘家叫心喜歡
 不等鍋煎就打扮
 打扮齊問公婆
 公婆惱的不言喘

A charcoal shovel curved the wrong way [is useless.] When her mother invited her she was so glad that, without waiting till the pot boiled, she dressed herself, and only when quite ready did she ask her parents-in-law [’s permission;] so that they were speechless with anger [lit., speechless and panting.]

[The introductory sentence, indicating the uselessness of a convex shovel, alludes to the incompatibility of the wife in her parents-in-law’s home.]

白菜撲地葉葉黃
 我娘生我不氣強
 小着吃的親娘奶
 長大伺候公帶婆
 人家的脚地嚙掃白
 人家的爺婆堂嚙抹淨
 人家的大嚙叫大
 人家的媽嚙叫媽
 人家的娃子嚙叫(他)

Cabbage leaves dropped on the ground become yellow. It was unfortunate that my mother gave birth to me. When I was a baby she nursed me. When I grew up I waited on my parents-in-law. I swept their floors clean, and poured libations in the halls of their ancestors. I even called my husband’s father papa and his mother mama, [but was only allowed to] call their baby “he!”

[The introductory sentence alludes to the dislike for or ill-treatment of daughters-in-law by their parents-in-law. The daughter-in-law in the present case contrasts the treatment received by her from her own mother and her parents-in-law respectively in spite of her filial conduct to the latter and loyalty to her husband. Though she used respectful forms of address to them she was not even allowed to address their child as an equal. 抹 has the local sound 茗 *ning*; Manchus and Mongols say *tsa-mo*. 大 has here the meaning 父, father.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

明咧
 小雞打了鳴咧
 老牛擡了尾咧
 閨女小子都該起咧
 小子起來拾泡糞兒
 閨女起來紡个纏兒

It is dawn! The cock has crowed. The ox has whisked his tail. The girls and boys must all get up. When the boys get up they collect dung; when the girls get up they weave tassels.

[From An P'ing, Chihli. Enjoins early rising. 糞 is probably dung for fuel. The ox whisks his tail as a sign that he is going to start work.]

要愛多慢慢挪
 要愛少滿山跑

If you desire [to collect] many, shift slowly. If you desire only a few, run all over the hill.

[Motto: *festina lente*. Sung by youngsters when picking flowers, fruit, herbs, etc., on the hills. From Chao-yüan, P'êng-lai, Huang Hsien, and other places in Shantung.]

年又將至心悵悵
 無乜作年只空空
 市上沒有賒布客
 村中沒有借錢人
 姐妹有錢無挪借
 兄弟朋友嫌儲貧
 把起酒杯飲一口
 目計連淚滿面酸

The year is again nearing its end, and my heart throbs sadly. I have no means to meet the expenses at the end of the year, being quite "broke." In the city [lit., street] there is no arranger of credit for buying cloth for making clothes; in my native village there is no money-lender. My sisters have money, but refuse to lend it; my brothers and friends disdain

CHINESE DITTIES.

me for my extreme poverty. I raise my glass and take a drink of wine. [As these painful] thoughts [become intolerable I lift my] eyes, and the tears streaming down my face [show the] sadness [of my heart.]

[From Wên-ch'ang Hsien, Shantung.]

春雨纏綿不肯晴
繁華零落可憐生
鶯兒咒罵會無用
惹得紅閨翦紙人
紙箕帚紙雲梯
女兒指血點脣眉
竿頭纒繫上
箇娘濕透小紅衣
這分明掃晴無術
還笑阿儂癡

The incessant Spring rain refuses to lift. What a pity that this fine season should be wasted! The oriole utters maledictions, yet without effect. There is nothing for it but for the young girls to cut out a paper man, paper broom and dust-basket, and a paper "cloud-ladder." With blood from their fingers they colour the lips and eyebrows, and binding [the paper figures] onto a pole [hang them out of the window.] [But all that happens is that] they all get their little red clothes saturated; thus showing that the rain cannot be etopped by this means; and all laugh at A-nung for her simplicity!

[From the rainy districts of Southern Kuangtung. A-nung is used as a generic term for young girls. The oriole usually pipes cheerfully, but the rain damps even his high spirits.]

門子要緊
火要緊
養活閨女脚要緊

The door is important; fire is important; in the bringing-up of girls their feet are important.

[This and the following eleven are from the Chao-yüan district of Shantung. Care of the door is important on account of thieves, of fire for fear of destruction, and the size of girls' feet, because they should be brought up decently and not be "gadders": one of the reasons alleged for the practice of compressing women's feet.]

南山頂上草一裸
 爲人不說兩老婆
 說的多光打仗
 打起仗來鬧哈哈
 有心待把大的打
 大的來的年數多
 有心待把小的打
 點臙脂擦粉兒來哄我
 大的小的一齊打
 滿家的孩子亂吵窠
 大的小的都不打
 街房鄰居笑話我

At the top of South Hill there is a blade of grass. A man should not have two wives. If he has several they only fight. And when they have started fighting they make a ridiculous hubbub. But if I think of beating my principal wife, she has been too many years in my home; and if I think of beating my concubine, she makes herself so charming to me with her paint and powder. If I beat both wife and concubine, all the children of the house will make an uproar. But if both wife and concubine are not beaten, the neighbours opposite and on each side will deride me [for not being able to manage my females.]

[The introductory phrase refers to one man, the husband, as contrasted with the relatively large number of wife and concubines.]

富人死了妻
 勸當拆洗衣
 窮人死了妻
 塌了上天梯

When the wife in a rich family dies, it [re-marriage] is as easy as changing one's linen; when the wife in a poor family dies, it is as if the ladder of heaven had fallen down.

[勸 should be 權. 權當 = 當作 = 如同. If the ladder of heaven has fallen down mounting thereto is difficult.]

有女莫嫁讀書郎
 朝朝夜夜守空房
 一朝飛到雲端去
 還要帶個小婆娘

CHINESE DITTIES.

A girl should not be married to a student; day and night she will live alone. Even if he should reach some lofty position he will only come back with a concubine.

[This and the preceding ditty refer to the low estimation in which women were held by the Chinese.]

莊戶
孫吃
豆腐

貴人
吃
貴物

Fine people eat fine things; the descendants of the rustic eat bean-curd.

[Bean-curd, in villages, is a cheap food. 孫 is difficult to explain; perhaps it is used with a derisory meaning such as 猢猻!]

無錢的
君子
受鼈的
氣

有錢的
王八
坐上席

A moneyed bastard sits in the stalls; but a poor gentleman suffers the bastard's scorn.

[鼈 is the freshwater turtle; here used for 忘八 or 王八 turtle ('s egg)=bastard.]

當了
婆婆
會
弄
聲兒

當了
和尚
會
念
經兒

是個
碗兒
大
其
虛

If it is bowl [for rice] it must be bigger than a wine-cup; [similarly] when a man is a priest he is [naturally] able to recite prayers; [so also] when a woman is a wife she cannot but cause a noise.

CHINESE DITTIES.

[The meaning of 大其盅 is obscure. 盅 is a covered cup for wine. The noise referred to is caused by the husband's mother teaching her daughter-in-law her duties.]

還 得 念 書	待 要 出 大 馱	必 定 出 個 馱	三 輩 不 念 書
------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

If for three generations [a family] does not study it will certainly produce a donkey; but even if it produce a big donkey it is still necessary for it to study.

[馱 or 馱 here read *lu* to rhyme. A small donkey, *sc.* stupid son, is useless; even a big donkey is insufficiently useful from the intellectual point of view.]

是 個 王 八 蛋	能 吃 不 能 幹	真 是 好 漢	能 吃 能 幹
-----------------------	-----------------------	------------------	------------------

If able to eat and manage his business he is really a good man; if able to eat but unable to manage his business he is a bastard!

["Able to eat" means to eat much, and so, according to Chinese ideas, have much strength and consequently ability to make money!]

後 學 馱 蹄	先 學 鬼 子 叫	門 口 掛 上 五 色 旗	七 天 一 個 禮 拜 日
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In every seven days there is one Sunday. [On that day] we hang the five-coloured flag out over the door. First we learn the foreign devil's noise, and afterwards [to wear] the donkey's raised hoofs.

[A hit at Western learning and fashions. "Noise" means language. A donkey is stupid and his hoofs, at the instep, are like the "foreign devil's" boots, not level with the ground like the sole of the Chinese shoe.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

我駛他一臀尿
 子路說
 顏淵瞪瞪眼
 孔子一見哈哈笑
 畢業生進聖廟

The graduate enters the temple of the Sage. When Confucius sees him he laughs "Ha! Ha!" Yen Yüan stares. Tzü Lu says: "I will drive him away . . ."

[The ending is neither dignified, classical, nor worthy of one of the principal disciples of Confucius, and is best left untranslated, but the tyro in Chinese translation (for whom these annotations are chiefly intended) must be warned against rendering the 尿 as coming from Tzü Lu. The following version is less objectionable.]

實在不要臉
 躡在廟台下
 子路加腳蹠
 顏淵瞪瞪眼
 我怎麼不知道
 那科中的你
 孔子一見哈哈笑
 畢業生進聖廟

The graduate enters the temple of the Sage. When Confucius sees him he laughs "Ha! Ha! I can easily tell where *you* graduated!" Yen Yüan stares. Tzü Lu "lets out" with his foot and kicks him out of the temple, [saying:] "Really you are without any sense of shame!"

[Another version of the preceding ditty.]

禿頭好了
 宣統跑了
 禿頭要開瓢
 宣統回了朝

When Hsüan T'ung returned to the throne the baldheads were to be beheaded. When Hsüan T'ung took to his heels the baldheads recovered.

["Baldheads": those who had cut off their queues on the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty.]

CHINESE DITTIES.

喫魚喫肉稻床棒
喝湯喝水沒骨壯

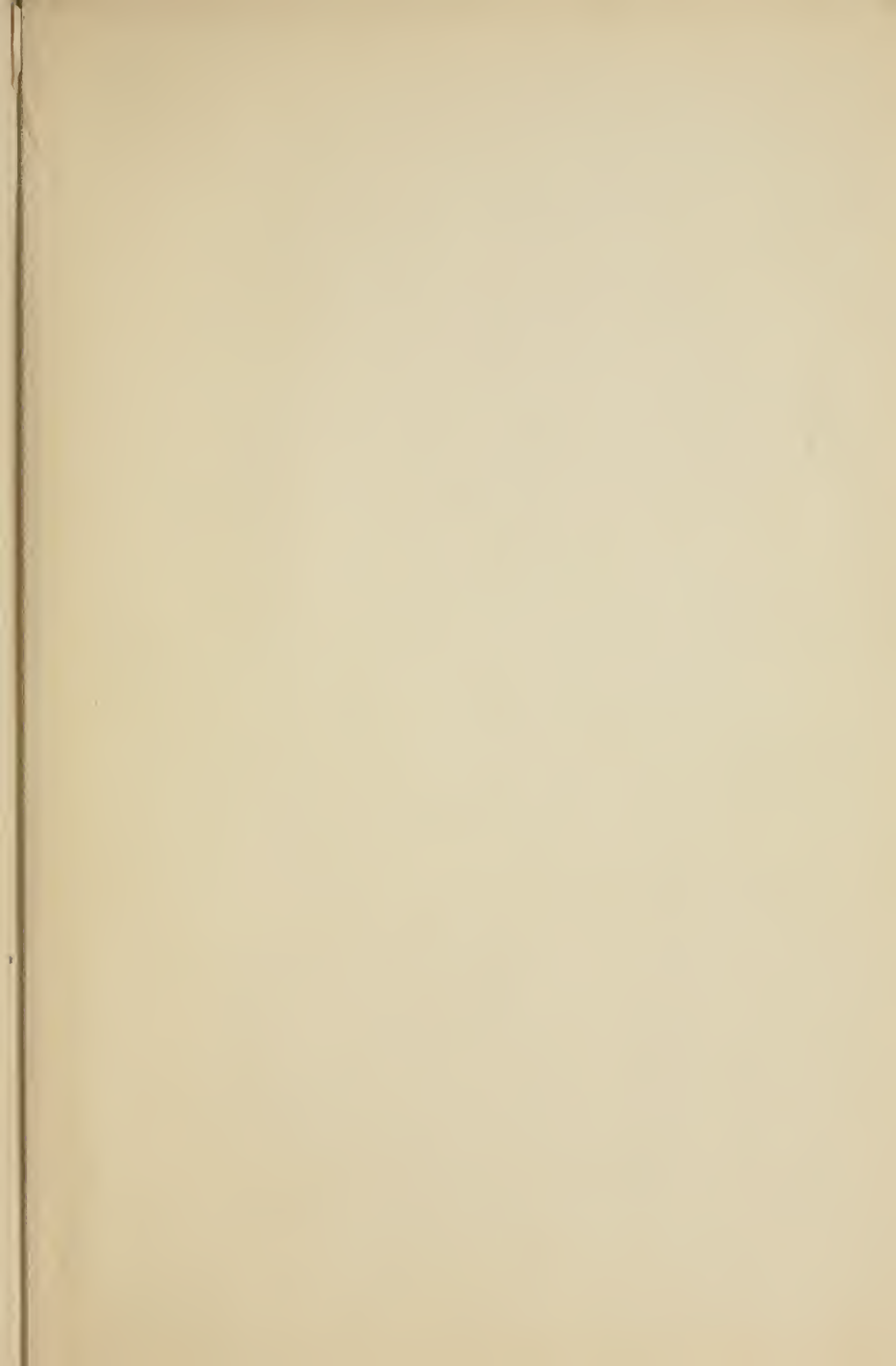
Drinking soup or water cannot bring strength; eating fish or meat make one "pot-bellied."

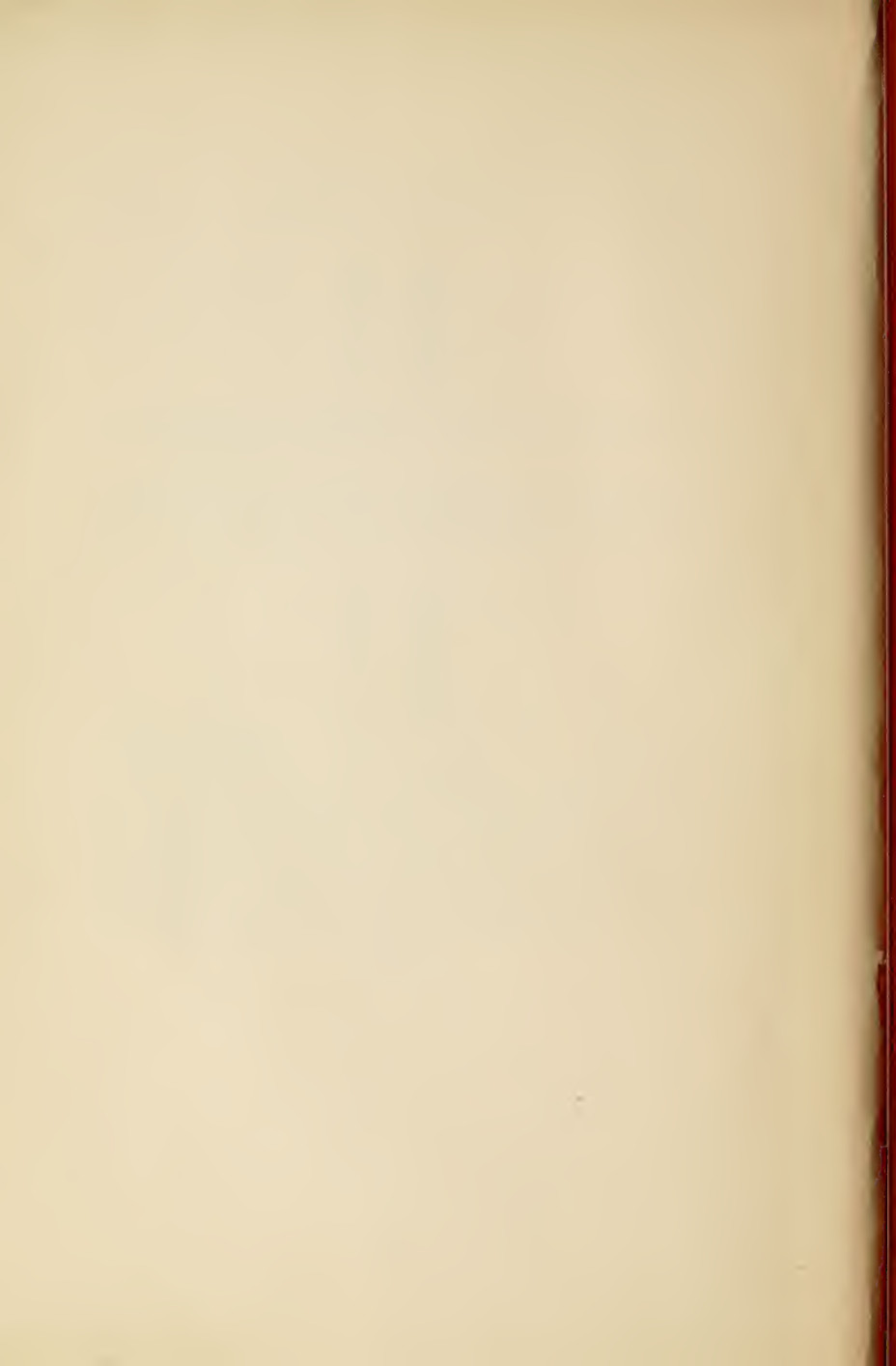
[Current in Wu Hsi, Kiangsu. 稻床 is an agricultural implement, used in South China, which bulges in its lower part. 喝 in the south and west has approximately the sound of 哈.]

豎頭棺材
轎子來轎子來

"A sedan-chair is coming! A sedan-chair is coming!"
"Behold! a coffin!"

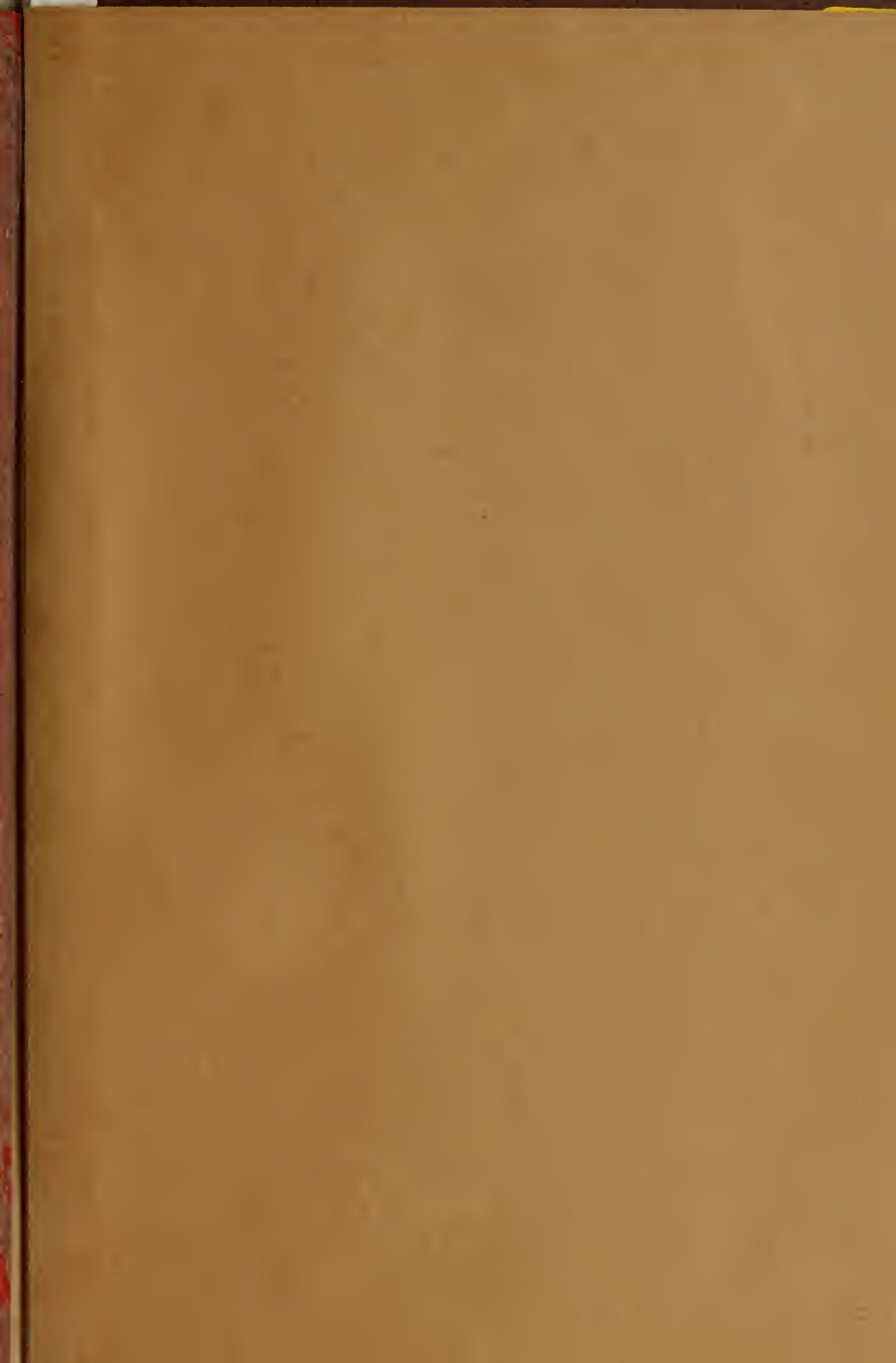
[Also from Wu Hsi. The streets in the towns of that district are narrow and the passengers crowded together. Those who travel by sedan-chair are more numerous than in most other places. The bearer in front has to keep on calling out: "A sedan-chair is coming!" to get the foot-passengers to let it pass. The latter resent this and retaliate by calling the sedan-chair a coffin, for which people must always give way. 子 is to be read here as 則, the sound given to it colloquially.]











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